

Post 10/19/66

U.S. Scientists Develop An Orwellian 'Big Eye'

By Gabriel Favino

Chicago Sun-Times

CHICAGO, Oct. 14—The big eye soon may be watching us all.

In primitive form, it already has been developed by a Northwestern University professor and two graduate students.

It has been taught to recognize geometric shapes and even neckties. Once taught, its gaze never leaves the object it has learned to recognize.

Inexorably, the eye follows the object.

It's called PRFCS—pattern recognition feedback control system.

The eye is basically a television camera connected to a computer.

According to Gordon J. Murphy, chairman of Northwestern's electrical engineering department, who conceived the eye, the camera obtains an image that is then converted to an electronic signal.

The signal is fed into the computer and then controls the camera in such a way that it instantly recognizes the object it must watch.

The eye can twist its universal-jointed neck 360 degrees horizontally, and it can tilt its head backward or forward for 270 degrees.

Ted G. Johnson, one of the graduate students working under Murphy's direction, trained the eye to focus on his necktie.

Johnson said that once the eye learned to recognize his necktie, the eye followed it wherever it went within the eye's range.